

সুলে বর্নবাদের বিরুদ্ধে অভিযান

CAMPAIGN AGAINST RACISM in SCHOOLS

DEFEND THE DANEFORD 12

SUPPORT THE FIGHT AGAINST RACISM IN OUR SCHOOLS



SUPPORT THE DANEFORD 12 and the CAMPAIGN AGAINST RACISM IN SCHOOLS (CARS)

NINE TEACHERS from Hackney, East London and Islington, an executive member of Tower Hamlets Trades Council and a student were all arrested on a picket of the Tower Hamlets Divisional Office of the ILEA on the morning of Wednesday 16th October. This demonstration was supported by Hackney and East London Teachers' Associations, the ILTA, and the Campaign Against Racism in Schools. It was a protest concerning the Local Education Officer's and the ILEA's refusal to do anything about racist violence in schools, particularly Daneford.

A recent spate of racist attacks in Daneford School started with a vicious razor attack on a young Bangladeshi boy. We were also supporting the consistent stand the Daneford NUT group have taken in fighting racism with the support of the local Bangladeshi Community. The picket was at all times peaceful. The police suddenly grabbed Norma Hundelby, NUT rep, of Daneford, and also Mary Trapp. They followed this by brutally attacking Richard Rieser, President of HTA. He was dragged along the ground and lost consciousness. People who tried to help him were arrested. A teacher from Hackney had his shirt ripped off his back and a teacher from East London had her sari ripped.

You may know that it is already Inner London NUT (ILTA) policy to support Norma Hundelby and Mary Trapp (Daneford) and Michael Gavan, President of Tower Hamlets Trades Council, who were arrested in Daneford School last term on the orders of the head and the deputy head. There was a peaceful picket organised by the Trades Council and

the Federation of Bangladeshi Youth Organisations along with teachers, to oppose a racist careers convention in the school, as the participants included the police, the armed forces and Barclays Bank, and there had been no consultation with the NUT, parents or the local community. Seventy per cent of the pupils are Bengali and there were no Bengali letters sent home.

Out of the co-operation between the Bengali community, their organisations, teachers, school students and parents has grown the Campaign Against Racism in Schools.

The court hearing for Norma, Mary and Michael is on **Monday November 4th**. The 11 people arrested on Wednesday October 16th are due to come up at **Highbury Magistrates Court on Friday November 22nd** and the case will last a number of days. The Campaign is calling for a mass demonstration at 9am. ILTA have already voted for a day's strike. The Campaign Against Racism in Schools sees these two sets of arrests as linked and the Defence Campaign includes all the people arrested i.e. the 11 (Norma and Mary were arrested twice) and Michael Gavan.

At a meeting of 300 people called by the Campaign Against Racism in Schools this month, there was much discussion concerning widespread racism in all our schools including violent attacks both in and outside some, obviously not just Daneford. The Campaign aims to spread a genuine fight against racism to all schools.

RACISM IN DANEFORD SCHOOL

CAMPAIGN AGAINST RACISM IN SCHOOLS

THE PRESENCE of racist organisations at the bogus careers convention, and the consequent arrests, drew activists from the Bangladeshi community and anti-racist teachers into a real unity of action. But very quickly all the groups who became involved in opposing racism in Daneford (Bangladeshi Educational Needs in Tower Hamlets, the Trades Council, East London Teachers Association, Jalalabad Parents Association, Hackney Teachers Association and Redcoats Parents Association) realised that a campaign needed to be built to root out racism from all schools. At every meeting parents voiced concern for the safety of their children at school and their anger at the continual failure of the ILEA to do anything about racist attacks in schools.

This was the background to the decision in July to launch the Campaign Against Racism in Schools. We knew we needed a number of meetings to hammer out detailed policies, but from the outset we had two fundamental aims:

- ★ to fight the cancer of racism in our schools;
- ★ to challenge ILEA's paper anti-racist policy — and to demand the adoption and implementation of a genuine anti-racist policy.

From then until the end of September we met regularly to respond to the mounting wave of racist attacks in schools and iron out our policies. The Campaign continued to press ILEA to act against racism but they maintained that racist attacks were nothing more than "alleged racial incidents". ILEA's arrogant dismissal of the fears of the Bangladeshi community underlined our view that only an active campaign around every school could root out racism.

This was the theme of our packed public meeting on October 10th which was attended by over 350 people. Parents, teachers, school students, community leaders and trade unionists — all were represented at the meeting. The only spokespersons from ILEA who turned up were D. Collins, Education Officer (Division 5) and Peter Aylmer (an ILEA member for Tower Hamlets). They completely failed to mollify the audience — every speaker condemned the Authority. The meeting demanded action. A picket of the ILEA offices in Tower Hamlets was agreed, Daneford NUT were promised full backing for their half-day strike against racism, and the Campaign called for a rally on the steps of County Hall on the afternoon of the Daneford stoppage.

The meeting also agreed a 9-point programme of demands:

1. A genuine anti-racist policy for schools.
2. No platform for racist organisations in schools or other ILEA institutions. Racist propaganda must be banned.
3. The racist police force must not be invited into schools.
4. Known racists who are pupils, teachers or governors must be excluded from the school system.
5. A real commitment from ILEA to bi-lingual education in line with community demands. Schools to ensure that the cultural and religious traditions of all students and their parents are respected.
7. A Race and Education Team, with community accountability, to monitor and help implement these measures.
8. Support for the self-organisation by school students to counter racism.

We are determined to fight as hard and as long as necessary to win these demands. No amount of harassment or intimidation from the police or ILEA will stop us.



STUDENTS DEMONSTRATE OUTSIDE COUNTY HALL

DANEFORD has a seventy per cent intake of Bangladeshi boys, with a rising intake in the first year. For years the NUT group has been demanding the resourcing the school so desperately needs. One constant request has been for Bangladeshi pastoral teachers and administrative workers so that essential communications can take place. Instead, the Head of the Bengali Department has suffered the downgrading of her department over a period of two years. Headmaster Williams failed to consult with her even when he took the major curricular decision to remove Bengali from the lower school timetable. Currently, the two teachers of Bengali do not have full timetables because of the failure to timetable Bengali properly. The school is massively under-resourced in relation to the language needs of the pupils despite pressure from the NUT group to increase staffing and improve resourcing in the school.

ILEA has turned a deaf ear to these demands and left Daneford starved of resources.

The school management has never taken a firm stand on racism despite pressure from the NUT group. Racist graffiti remains on the school walls, Bangladeshi boys are spat at, and both verbally and physically abused in corridors and classrooms. Money is extorted from them on a daily basis, with threats of violence if payments are not met. Such is the fear of many boys that they do not dare come to school if they haven't got the money to make the payments.

On Thursday, July 18th, a first year boy was slashed with a razor on his chest and back by four older boys. Another first year boy was cut on the hand in the same incident, which took place on a main corridor of the school.

In the first two weeks of the current term there was an escalation of racist attacks after violence at a local fun fair spilled over into school and a first year boy had his ear cut. During this entire period no effective action was taken by the management of the school. No assembly was called and a climate of fear developed unchecked. Classes in the lower school were half-empty as Bangladeshi pupils were too terrified to attend, many sought sanctuary in their former primary schools.

When parents came to the school, fearful for the safety of their children, there was no-one whom they could speak to in Bengali to register their concern. This was yet another example of the institutionalised racism in our school which is encouraged by the ILEA. During this period NUT members had to walk boys home because of the fear felt by many of the pupils in the school. The Headmaster asked the NUT group to break official action over non-supervision of pupils at lunch-time. The school called a meeting of parents of First Year pupils. Disgracefully, Headmaster Williams chose not to attend and showed his utter complacency towards fighting racism in Daneford. There was no

When passing a group of Bangladeshi boys in the corridor, Headmaster Williams asked them:

"Have you come to Daneford to learn English or Bengali? Don't you know it's rude to speak Bengali?"

★ ★ ★

Deputy Head Ravden defending management's opposition to Bengali as core curriculum:

"It is strictly a political objection. English parents will object. It will create racial tension. We will not get white parents to accept this. There will be reservations from the white community about the introduction of Bengali. It will be political dynamite to introduce Bengali. This is the heart of NF land and it would highlight racial antagonism."

★ ★ ★

A teacher with 10 years experience at Daneford:

"Both myself and my colleague were unable to stop this near riot due to the level of aggression and the consolidated physical resistance. It seems obvious that the Bangladeshi pupils involved have suffered enough injustice and are organising themselves for protection. There was a real fear of an out of control situation developing and fear that physical injury would be sustained."

★ ★ ★

D. Collins, Divisional Education Officer, in response to the Daneford NUT demands for action on racist attacks and a request for an urgent meeting on school security:

"... in connection with site security and alleged racial incidents in the school ... I do not consider that it would be practicable at such short notice to set up the kind of meeting you have suggested nor do I think that it would be appropriate."

★ ★ ★

Headmaster Williams to a black teacher at Daneford:

"For how long will these Bengali boys be coming to this district at this rate? I don't suppose there will be a need for you in a few years time?"



STUDENTS DEMAND AN END TO RACIST VIOLENCE

interpreter present and parents left the meeting feeling angry and frustrated. The standing of the school in the Bangladeshi community was further eroded by the total lack of concern shown in this meeting.

The NUT groups demanded an immediate meeting with the Authority on site security to discuss the physical safety of pupils and teachers. Mr Collins, Education Officer for Division 5, refused to allow this meeting and dismissed the racist attacks as "alleged racial incidents". A letter was also sent to Frances Morrell from Bangladeshi Educational Needs in Tower Hamlets complaining about the complete lack of response to racist attacks by the management of the school. The letter also criticised William's non-attendance at the meeting of first year pupils.

The situation was allowed to deteriorate and on Friday, October 4th there was a near riot in a corridor during mid-morning break when a fight broke out between two fifth year classes. The Headmaster was absent for the whole day. Many teachers were concerned about the level of tension and their anxiety was heightened by the inaction of the senior management.

During the lunch-hour of the same day the atmosphere worsened with groups of boys congregating in the corridors. Bangladeshi boys, afraid of another violent outburst, asked NUT teachers for protection. The NUT rep. was asked, because of no action by management, to seek advice from NUT head office, Hamilton House. She asked the Acting Head if he felt he had the situation under control. He replied that one entire fifth year class had been sent home for fear of reprisals (the NUT found out later that only Bangladeshi boys had been sent home). He also sold her he had heard rumours of an intruder armed with a meat cleaver. He then said that four boys were believed to be armed. Despite all this, he maintained he had the situation under control!

Hamilton House informed the Rep. that any member who felt unable to teach because of stress did not have to do so. But no Daneford teacher took up this offer, such was their concern for the safety of the boys.

Throughout the afternoon boys voiced their fear about what might happen at the end of school. Bangladeshi boys in one tutor group told a teacher they had been ambushed at lunch-time by boys wearing plastic bags as masks. The boys had been chased along the road and were very frightened about going home at the end of the day. Several members of staff asked the Acting Head what he would do to ensure the safety of the boys. The NUT Rep. urged the consideration of a staggered send home of the boys. This was rejected.

At the end of the school day a teacher, worried about the safety of the boys accompanied them out of the school buildings. On returning to the playground the teacher saw a group of unknown youths masked with red plastic bags. Many staff felt unable to cope with the situation.

On October 9th the NUT group voted to take strike action and join the protest at County Hall with the Bangladeshi community.

Throughout this period Bangladeshi students have been organising within the school to fight racism. Their action has inspired NUT members. They have held meetings, produced letters for parents and leaflets for their fellow students within the school. Above all they have made these demands to Headmaster Williams:

- ★ All racist boys to be thrown out of school.
- ★ Racist teachers to be sacked.
- ★ The Headmaster must do something about racist fights, not just ignore them.
- ★ Bengali lessons for all boys who want them, not just for fourth and fifth years.

ILEA's DAY OF SHAME

FOR YEARS Frances Morrell ignored the pleas from teachers and school students at Daneford for action against racism. Letters were never answered and ILEA officials brushed aside all their requests for help. But on October 17th the NUT group in Daneford, and even more importantly the Daneford school students, came to County Hall to shake ILEA out of its shameful complicity with racism.

Daneford NUT struck for the afternoon, with the full backing of the NUT Executive. They, and delegations from schools throughout London, also joined the Campaign Against Racism in Schools rally of over 300 people on the steps of County Hall — which slammed ILEA's paper commitment to anti-racism.

Morrell, and all the Labour members of the ILEA had previously been written to and challenged to meet us and respond to our demands. Not only did the ILEA leader refuse to see us — her cronies even tried to pretend she was across the road at the DES.

The only one who did come out was Tower Hamlets member, Peter Aylmer. He stumbled through a list of excuses and half-truths and failed to satisfy anyone. A string of speakers from the community slated ILEA for their hypocrisy. The Authority's "anti-racist" policy was castigated as a worthless sham aimed at winning black votes. The school students were cheered when they demanded action to stop racist attacks in school.

ILEA eventually let us in to use their conference chamber to continue our meeting, but still none of the other members would come and hear us. Then the school students marched down to the office of Barrie Stead, Chair of the Schools sub-committee, and insisted he came to the chamber to listen to the demands. Of course, he tried to fob them off but they refused to leave until he agreed to come.

Stead was then presented with the strike demands of Daneford NUT by the NUT rep., Norma Hundley. Stead tried to waffle out of trouble by saying that Bengali wasn't taught to the first, second and third years in Daneford because "it was very hard to learn." The rest of his answers were a similar mixture of stupidity and evasion.

The meeting wound up at 5pm but a group stayed behind determined to confront Morrell. When we found her she ran into her office and her "minders" barred the door. But not before we told her that we are not going to accept any more of her disgraceful policy of covering up for racism. Too many years have been wasted waiting for Morrell to do something about racism in schools. But now the campaign has really begun and Frances Morrell will never succeed in hiding from anti-racists again. ILEA's so-called anti-racist policy has been exposed as worthless — the fight is on to win a real commitment to anti-racism.

ডেইনফোর্ডের ২২ জনকে সমর্থন করুন ALL OUT 22nd NOVEMBER

DEFEND THE DANEFORD 12 Model Resolution

"This GMC/branch/Trades Council/School NUT group etc. pledges full support for the Campaign to Defend the Daneford 12. We fully support the right of trade unionists to protest peacefully against racism. We therefore agree to support the protest outside Highbury Magistrates Court on Friday, November 22nd at 9am, the first morning when the defendants have their case heard.

"We also agree to donate £ to the Defence Campaign and to affiliate to the Campaign Against Racism in Schools.

"We further agree to call on the ILEA to give an undertaking that none of the arrested teachers, nor any of the school students or teachers active in the Campaign, will be victimised."

Please pass the above motion and send copies to the Campaign at the address below and copies to Frances Morrell, ILEA, County Hall SE1 7PB and to the Greater London Labour Party, Walworth Road, SE1.

We estimate we may need £5000 to fight in the courts. All money for the Daneford 12 Defence Fund should be sent to: Daneford 12 Defence Fund, c/o Tower Hamlets Trades Council, 59 Bow Rd., E3.

For speakers about the Campaign please contact either Terry Viney, Daneford School, 729 3535 (home: 777 6004) or Chris Pate, Mulberry School, 790 6327 (home: 987 1795).

HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT US?

The Campaign Against Racism in Schools has called a mass demonstration outside Highbury Magistrates Court at 9am on Friday 22nd November in support of those arrested and to draw attention to the aims of the Campaign. We have written to ILTA in light of the resolution below, asking them to hold their strike at the same time.

Motion carried at Inner London Teachers' Association (NUT) on Wednesday 16th October:

"1. ILTA condemns the arrest of 11 NUT members during the peaceful picket of DO5 against Authority inaction in response to racist attacks in Daneford School.

2. ILTA agrees to support ELTA's call for official strike action against: a) these arrests; b) the lack of action by ILEA on racist attacks in schools in East London.

3. ILTA calls on schools to send delegates to the lobby of County Hall at 1.30 on Thursday 17th October in support of the official Daneford strike."

WE CALL ON ALL ANTI-RACISTS IN LONDON TO SUPPORT THE DEMONSTRATION AND STRIKE ACTION ON FRIDAY 22nd NOVEMBER: Highbury Magistrates Court, Holloway Road (by Highbury Corner and tube).

JOIN THE CAMPAIGN

THE PRESENT situation in schools in East London is cause for very serious concern. For years Asian and black school children have been the victims of racial violence in and around the school premises. For years they have suffered the prejudice and indifference of governors, headmasters and teachers. The climate of hostility and discrimination, buttressed by the structural racism of institutions, has been a major barrier to the development of our youth.

At the most vulnerable and perceptive period of their lives young black people go through a process of deep alienation because of their experience of racism. Challenging this racism makes alienation give way to a solidarity among all those who suffer racism and injustice and who are committed to anti-racism and social justice.

The Campaign Against Racism in Schools has successfully brought together students, parents, teachers, and community activists from all over East London to actively fight racism. In the process, many have already had direct experience of police brutality when 11 people were arrested after the police attacked a peaceful demonstration at the ILEA Divisional Office in Tower Hamlets.

Asian and black people have always known the forces you must contend with when fighting racism but for many of the teachers and white supporters it was a new and sobering lesson.

The Campaign is now strong. Students in schools are organising, as are their parents. More and more teachers and trade unionists are joining us. The Campaign is expan-

ding every week. Though initially centred around events at Daneford, it has now become the focus for pressurising ILEA to begin respecting its own anti-racist statements and insisting on the implementation, and effective monitoring of, a real anti-racist policy in all of Inner London.

All those involved in the Campaign know that the issue at hand can only be dealt with through concerted and consistent action. The growing support for the demands of this campaign is an indication of the seriousness with which it is viewed by concerned people all over London.

We will not hesitate to demonstrate, picket and take strike action to pursue our objective to rid schools of racism. We will not be threatened by unprovoked police brutality and we will not allow ILEA to be complacent or indifferent any longer.

Our communities are suffering. A generation of our youth face the trauma of underachievement, with no hope for the future — brought about directly by the racism in ILEA and its institutions.

- ★ Stand by the students!
- ★ Stand by their parents and communities!
- ★ Stand by the anti-racist teachers!
- ★ Join the fight against racism in schools!

Kumar Murshid, Co-Chairperson, Campaign Against Racism in Schools

P&P: Tower Hamlets Campaign Against Racism in Schools, c/o BENTH, Montefiore Centre, Hanbury/Deal St., E1.

Sponsors of the Campaign include: Bangladeshis' Educational Needs in Tower Hamlets; Tower Hamlets TUC; East London Teachers Association (NUT); Jafallabad Parents Association; Hackney Teachers Association (NUT); Redcoats Parents Association; Inner London Teachers Association (NUT); Islington Teachers Association (NUT).

খুলে বর্নবাদের বিরুদ্ধে
আন্দোলন সমর্থন করুন